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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330
Letter No. 2566

July 10, 1992

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH, speaking to the U.S. Agricultural Communicators Congress, announced his support for an amendment to make the gas tax exemption for ethanol proportional to the amount of ethanol used in gasoline. This would allow ethanol blends to compete with other additives. "Let me say it straight out, in plain English, I support ethanol, and I believe it must become a major player in the fuel market," Bush said. Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.

CROWDER RESIGNS -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan says Richard T. Crowder is resigning as under secretary of agriculture for international affairs and commodity programs effective July 20. Crowder, who has served in the number three position at USDA since April 1989, is leaving to spend more time with his family in suburban Minneapolis. A search for a replacement is underway. Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.

FARM PRODUCTION EXPENDITURES DOWN -- U.S. farm production expenditures were \$129.8 billion in 1991, down 1.2 percent from \$131.6 billion in 1990. Expenditures were lower for all major categories except for farm services, fertilizer, ag chemicals, seeds and farm supplies. Farm services, including rent, the largest 1991 expenditure by farms at \$28.7 billion, accounted for 22 percent of the nation's production expenses. Contact: Doug Kleweno (202) 720-4214.

HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS -- U.S. exports of horticultural products to all countries in April 1992 totaled \$483 million, which is 10 percent above the same month a year earlier. Apples, hops, canned vegetables and wine registered the sharpest increases for the month, while raisins and frozen vegetables declined slightly. During the first seven months (October to April) of fiscal year 1992, the total value of U.S. horticultural exports was \$3.55 billion -- 15 percent over the same period last year. Contact: Kelly Kirby Flowers (202) 720-0911.

SUGAR MARKET CHANGES -- The historically volatile world sugar market is again facing great uncertainties, says USDA economist Ron Lord. The main factor? Political and economic upheavals in the former Soviet Union, Cuba and the Central and Eastern European countries. Cuba had been supplying 3 to 4 million metric tons of sugar annually to the former Soviet Union and another 1 million tons to the Central and Eastern European countries. In return, Cuba received subsidized inputs and guaranteed high prices for its sugar. But that arrangement has ended, and the new government entities in the former Soviet Union are strapped for cash and will be hard pressed to buy large quantities of sugar. Contact: Ron Lord (202) 219-0888.

HUFF APPOINTED -- Mississippi native **James B. Huff, Sr.**, has been sworn in as the 12th administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration at USDA. Huff was nominated for the post by President **George Bush** on March 6 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate June 26. Huff succeeds **Gary C. Byrne**, who held the position from March 1990 to December 1991, when he was sworn in as a board member to the Farm Credit Administration. Huff operates a 600-acre cattle and tree farm in Taylorsville, Miss., and earned a B.S. degree in agriculture from Mississippi State University in 1954. He was the FmHA state director in Mississippi from November 1989 until his recent appointment. Contact: **Larry Casey** (202) 720-1255.

PLANT GENOME RESEARCH will be spotlighted at an international conference to be held Nov. 9 to 11 in San Diego, Calif. Genomes are chromosomes. "Activities in the area of plant genome research have grown tremendously in the last two or three years," says **Susan McCarthy**, coordinator of the Plant Genome Database and Information Center at USDA's National Agricultural Library. "The 'Plant Genome I' conference will allow scientists to exchange ideas and share their experiences in mapping plant genomes." Contact: **Brian W. Norris** (301) 504-6778.

BEEF EXPORTS CLIMBING STEADILY -- Since 1990, U.S. beef exports have jumped 18 percent, and are expected to surge 14 percent this year, says USDA economist **Linda Bailey**. Shipments to some key markets have been expanding, and Japan will likely import more U.S. beef in 1992. Meanwhile, Japan remains the largest U.S. market for beef, and over the long term its imports will rise, Bailey says. The recent surge in beef exports is part of a trend according to Bailey, Contact: **Linda Bailey** (202) 219-1285.

USDA ACCEPTS ONE MILLION ACRES -- USDA has accepted an additional 998,211 acres of highly erodible and other environmentally sensitive cropland into the Conservation Reserve Program, Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** says. We now have 35,395,951 acres enrolled in the program, Madigan says. Contact: **Bruce Merkle** (202) 720-8206.

ALTHOUGH MUCH OF LOS ANGELES burned during the recent riots, USDA's Extension Service's Common Ground projects stood untouched. Common Ground garden projects teach participants to produce and use vegetables to improve diet and daily nutrition. "People take pride in their ownership of these projects and protect them as anyone protects what is theirs," says **Rick Gomez**, Extension Service's National Program Leader for the Urban Gardening Program. Through innovative community-based programs, Extension Service efforts like Common Ground continue to make a noticeable difference in many of our nation's inner cities. In Los Angeles, for example, more than 20,000 individuals have participated in gardens, workshops and school projects since Common Ground began in 1977. Contact: **Charles Morgan** (202) 690-3656.

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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1831 -- USDA scientists are studying the impacts of higher levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, Brenda Curtis talks with the scientists about the positive and negative effects of higher carbon dioxide levels. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1313 --Olympic horses; urban gardening; cooking at the White House; global warming update; careers in agriculture. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1822 -- USDA News Highlights; a shot in the arm for dairy exports; a good quality herb; wetlands and farming; a major "minor" crop crisis. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1528 -- Vitamin C and colon cancer; vitamin C and cell damage; mixed bag of results; vitamin C and fertility; vitamin C and gingivitis. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., July 20, U.S. ag trade update; Tues., July 21, crop/weather update, dairy outlook, catfish production; Wed., July 22, rice yearbook; Thurs., July 23, oil crops yearbook, mink production, poultry production; Fri., July 24, livestock/poultry update, cattle on feed. (These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill takes a look at a program designed to help farmers with disabilities; Will Pemble reports on a new time tunnel to measure carbon dioxide effects on plants; Scott Huffman reports on research to study aflatoxin in corn.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA meteorologist Ray Motha on weather and crops; Allan West, USDA's Forest Service, on fire season update; USDA economist Peter Buzzanell on sugars and sweeteners.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- DeBoria Janifer reports on Watermelon Feast Day at USDA; Pat O'Leary reports on the electronic library.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- Agriculture Update, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

LARGE INCREASE...in cotton acreage is reported in the area served by **Jerry Gehman** (WASG, Atmore, Ala.). Jerry says cotton acreage has boomed from 20,000 acres to 60,000 acres in two growing seasons. A new gin is being built to process the product. Insect pressure is expected because of the mild winter. Jerry's station was recently sold and new management has been installed.

IT'S A FLIP OF THE COIN...whether to use irrigation water now or wait until August when need will likely be greater, says **Bruce Gaarder** (KNEB, Scottsbluff, Neb.). Bruce says he covered a tour sponsored by the city Chamber of Commerce of the North Platte River watershed in Wyoming. Reservoirs were only half full. Producers on the North Platte irrigation system are scheduled to get only one-half their allocation this year.

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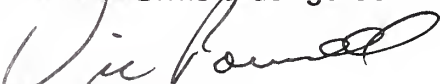
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A MORNING REPORT ON AGRICULTURE...is being added to the broadcast schedule of KSBW-TV, Salinas, Calif. **Jim Adamson** says the morning news is being expanded from 30 minutes to one hour. He'll be doing the ag news segment and weather. Jim says vegetable production is a major mover of the local economy, and the station call letters reflect that fact. He says KSBW stands for "The Salad Bowl of the World."

NEWS BUREAU...founder **Fred Berns** (Berns Bureau, Washington, D.C.) has sold the organization to assignment editor **Matt Kaye**. Offices have been moved to Capitol Hill. The focus continues to be agriculture. The new phone number is (202) 628-1432. Fred keeps busy giving marketing seminars to associations and trade groups.

FARMING...is a dangerous occupation. Talk safety. Help keep 'em safe.


VIC POWELL

Chief, Radio and TV Division